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REVIEWS AND PUBLICATIONS

Grau, V., Dr. Juan. 1993. *Aventuras en Isla de Pascua* (Adventures in Easter Island). Ediciones OIKOS Ltda, Agustinas 641-11, Santiago, Chile. 313 pp. (In Spanish).

Review by William Liller, Ph.D.
Viña del Mar, Chile

Those who attended the *Rapa Nui Rendezvous* last August in Laramie remember well the tall, bearded Dr. Grau who spoke knowingly about *Jubaea chilensis*, the Chilean palm tree that once may have forested Easter Island. Dr. Grau is well-known to *chilenos* in several ways: as the Secretary General of the Instituto de Ecología de Chile, as a highly respected medical doctor, and most recently as a prolific author. In 1993 alone, OIKOS Ltda, churned out an amazing seven (at least) full-length books of his, ranging in topics from the care and treatment of asthma, the raising and protection of chinchillas, how and why to stop smoking, and three books of a series, *La Ecología del Pequeño José*, relating the adventures of a 12-year old boy in the mountains of Chile, then on the coast of Chile, and now on Easter

Island. In these books, José travels with his widowed mother, his 6-year old brother, their little dog Tuki, and the wise and knowledgeable grandfather, Don Juan, who is none other than Dr. Grau.

Aventuras en Isla de Pascua is thinly disguised as fiction: the group stays at the home of Orlando Paoa whose daughter Julia Paoa Hotus is, in fact, Grau's god-daughter (the book is dedicated to her). On the first morning, José meets Hetereki Hotus Tepano, the 12-year old son of Alberto Hotus, and the two boys set off on horseback on an exciting adventure involving stolen antiquities hidden in a cave on the Poike peninsula.

Later, José attends classes at the island school and learns much of Easter Island from his teachers of history (Ana Maria Arredondo), the Rapanui language (Marilú Hey Paoa), and natural sciences (María Hernández). On week-ends they visit the well-known island sites and learn first hand about them from various local experts (also named). In addition, Don Juan (Grau) gives talks to island groups about the flora, the fauna, and the frail island ecology, and throughout the book he liberally sprinkles stern warnings about the increasingly rapid deterioration of our planet and especially Easter Island--and what we must do to conserve them both.

The book is loaded with information about the island, and for those with ages from 8 on up and able to read Spanish, it is an entertaining introduction to Rapa Nui. There is no question about it being up to date since Dr. Grau refers several times to the *Rapa Nui Rendezvous*. In particular, he tells us about a conversation that he had with Thor Heyerdahl. Grau asked, "How is it that if the islanders migrated from the continent as you believe, they did not bring metal tools with them such as they used every day?" Grau reports that Heyerdahl pondered in silence a short while--and then changed the topic of conversation. Touché!

This nicely--but frugally--illustrated (drawings only) paperback can be ordered directly from the publisher.

[Editor's note: this book has just been released in English (1994) and a version in Japanese is being planned. The price (sent airmail) is US \$25. Specify English or Spanish. Write to Ediciones Oikos, Ltda, Agustinas 641, Depto. 11, Santiago de Chile.]

